**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES ●
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES**

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES AGENCY**

Trauma Care Systems
Opportunity for Revision

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Airplane on 210 freeway

OBJECTIVES

- List three benefits of verification of trauma centers by the American College of Surgeons (ACS)
- List two goals of the Statewide trauma system
- State the role of government regulators
- Define "Regulatory Capture"
- Discuss three issues with the use of the ACS verification in the Trauma Regulations
- Develop two recommendations to be considered in a Trauma Regulation revision

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Trauma System Goals

➢ Decrease the incidence and severity of trauma
➢ Ensure access to care
➢ Prevent unnecessary deaths and disabilities
➢ Contain costs
➢ Ensure appropriate resources
➢ Remain viable in today's healthcare environment
➢ Get some recognition and help for the system

Glendale Fire Department

Disclosure

- I am a regulator
- "… Fire Department needs a sweeping overhaul of how it responds to thousands of 911 calls for emergency help each year, according to a letter from the **county's top regulator** obtained by The Times.
- Trauma systems are designed, implemented and monitored by regulators

No, not that type of regulator

A Government Regulator

Evil   Boring

We have feelings too.

We - PROTECT THE PUBLIC!

- Bad things happen when regulations are poor, unclear or regulators fail to do their job
- "Regulatory Capture"- regulator does the bidding of entity they are regulating
  - Oil derricks blow up
  - Gas leaks
  - Patients are abused
  - People will die!

illustrations of.com   #1134497

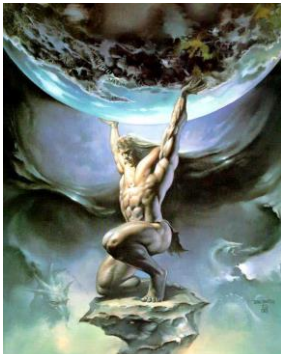### Regulatory failures – the list is endless
Death, Destruction, Pillaging

Deep Water Horizon Oil   **San Bruno Fire/gas leak**

Okay - Back to Trauma Regulations

- Updating the trauma regulations
  - This is an opportunity to improve on the "Trauma Care System" by creating consistency of care and ensuring quality for trauma patients

I do not take system design and monitoring lightly!

And neither should you.

- The LEMSA is:
  - Making the choice of hospital destination for the patient because I absolutely **know**:
    - this is the best destination and you will receive the best care and have greatest chance of survival
    - this is the best destination every hour, day, month and year

- It is an important policy decision, the LEMSA is instructing the paramedics to bypass other hospitals to get to the magnificent Trauma Center
- The LEMSA is assuring other hospitals we know this Trauma Center is the best destination
- We are removing business from local hospitals on behalf of the patient

- I think this is a big responsibility
- How can I assure the public that our destination policies are the best for them?

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Trust but Verify!

- Honestly, the only way to know for certain, is to have a outside, third party, recognized expert, using accepted standards go in and check.

I was given the opportunity to discuss new regulations and work through key issues.

- Major discussion around the trauma regulations - American College of Surgeons (ACS)Verification requirement for Level I and II and possibly Level III trauma centers

What are the pros?

- ACS has an **effective evaluation process** to review and verify the qualifications of facilities according to a specific set of resources and quality standards
- ACS reviewers have **extensive experience** in providing care at trauma centers across the country
- Ensures a current and **national perspective**

What are the Pros? (continued)

- ACS is proven and nationally recognized for their **expertise**
- 86% of the Level I and II trauma centers in California are verified
- **Credibility** with the public
- **Credibility** with politicians

What are the Pros? (Continued)

- ACS has the expertise to verify quality care
- TQIP requirements add to QI process
  - Allows for national benchmarking
  - Training for quality data

What are the Pros? (Continued)

The American College of Surgeons is the nationally & internationally recognized authority in trauma care

What are the Pros? (Continued)

- ACS criteria is similar to the current trauma regulations
- ACS review process is utilized in 44 states
- Using ACS guidelines allows currency (1999 was the last revision of the Trauma Regulations)

What are the Pros? (Continued)

- ACS is the gold standard for trauma hospital and care assessment
- External independent review
- I am attesting to the fact:
  - When you are being grilled about your system, it is comforting to point to the ACS as your trauma center verification standard

What are the Cons?

- Cost - $15,000 +
- Not able to control the cost
- Being tied to the ACS committee on trauma guidelines which may not be applicable or at times questionable
- Some aspects of "Optimal" care of the injured patient may not be feasible
- Loss of some trauma centers
- ACS may be too prescriptive

If ACS Verification is Required

- Processes must be **thoroughly thought through** and vetted
  - How long of a grace period before verification met
  - What if a trauma center fails
    - Probation
    - Suspension

- Will there be the ability to request an **exemption** from some standards
- What will merit an exemption
- Who will decide if an exemption is granted

Revision of the Trauma Regulations also Provides the Opportunity to:

- Address proliferation of trauma centers
  - Consider population
    - No more than one Level II trauma center shall be designated for each 350,000 population
    - No more than one Level I trauma center shall be designated for each 600,000 population

- Geographic
  - Number of miles between trauma centers
  - Designation of a Level III trauma center must be X miles from Level I or II center
  - Ease of access (freeway close)

- Number of potential trauma patients
- Number of trauma patients with severe injury
- Transport times

Where do we go from here?

Consider:

- Continue with community input
- Listen to experts
- Be engaged in the process
- Require strong rationale
- Consider that the regulations will not be re-opened for 20 years
- Learn from other States experience
- Always protect the public and patients
- Trust but Verify!

Thank you for your attention.
Any questions?